

Appendix 5

Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship Whistleblowing Policy

(To be read in conjunction with Whistleblowing: Guidance for Employers and Code of Practice)

Introduction

By actively developing a healthy culture of openness Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship wants to encourage employees to raise issues which concern them at work. As an organisation we want to observe high standards of business and personal ethics within the conduct of staff duties and responsibilities. A healthy culture is one where we practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and we comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship understanding of a healthy culture is one that is based on our Statement of Faith and our Community Standards. We endeavour to train our all workers and volunteers in Whistleblowing law and the organisation's policies.

Whistleblowing definition:

According to ACAS, Whistleblowing constitutes:

"By law, there are several issues you can whistle blow about. These are called 'qualifying disclosures'.

Qualifying disclosures include:

- *a criminal offence – for example, an employer has been trying to bribe people*
- *the breach of a legal obligation by an organisation – for example, an employer has neglected their duty of care towards children in a care home*
- *a miscarriage of justice – for example, a member of staff has been dismissed for something that turned out to be a computer error*
- *someone's health and safety being in danger – for example, an employer has forced staff to serve contaminated food*
- *damage to the environment – for example, an employer has been regularly polluting local rivers*

You can also whistle blow about someone trying to cover up information about any of these issues."

Personal grievances (E.G. bullying, harassment, discrimination) are not covered by whistleblowing law, unless it is in the public's interest. These would be addressed through the complaint's procedure.

How does the whistleblowing process work?

- If an employee is concerned about any form of malpractice, they should normally first raise the issue with their line manager. This can be done at any time, either verbally or in writing.
- If they feel they cannot tell their line manager, for whatever reason (e.g. the malpractice issue the employee wishes to raise may involve their line manager or a person who is a friend of the line manager/the matter is so serious it should be brought to the attention of senior leadership) they should raise the issue with their line manager's manager; a prescribed person or their third party manager.
- If the employee feels they cannot raise it with any of the above, they can raise the malpractice issue with the Compliance Officer/nominated person on the senior management team/ President & CEO/named person on Board of Directors.
- The whistleblower does not need to provide evidence to support their concern.
- You can whistle blow anonymously (using the organisation's process); however, Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship might not be able to take the claim any further, if there isn't enough information to follow.

Our Response

- After an employee has raised a concern, Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship will decide how to respond in a responsible and appropriate manner. Usually this will involve making internal enquiries first, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation at a later stage which may be formal or informal depending on the nature of the concern raised. External investigators may be brought in where necessary. Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship will endeavour to complete investigations within a reasonable time, which will be communicated at each stage of the investigation.
- Armstrong Hall Christian fellowship will keep the employee informed of the progress of the investigation carried out and when it is completed. Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship will not be able to inform them of any matters which would infringe the duty of confidentiality owed to others; however, Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship will take reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the whistleblower, where requested (unless required by law to break that confidentiality).
- If the whistleblower is anonymous, Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship cannot guarantee feedback can be given and the action of looking into a concern could be limited.
- Employees will not be opening themselves up to detrimental treatment, retribution or risking their job security by whistleblowing, and all staff have organisational protection if they raise concerns in the right way. Any person who victimises a bona fide whistleblower will be liable to disciplinary action and liable to an employment tribunal claim (which may include liability for unlimited damages) brought by the whistleblower against them personally. To ensure the protection of all our employees, those who maliciously make an allegation, they do not reasonably believe to be true and/or made in the public interest, may also be liable to disciplinary action.

If you are not happy with how Armstrong Hall Christian Fellowship handles the whistleblowing, you can contact:

[Protect - Speak up stop harm - Whistleblowing Homepage](#)

[Work and employment law advice | Acas](#)

Government's guidance on Whistleblowing:

[Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK](#) (England / Wales / Scotland)

[Whistleblowing - mygov.scot](#) (Scotland)

[Blowing the whistle on workplace wrongdoing | nidirect](#) (Northern Ireland)

[Written Statement - Whistleblowing \(17 April 2013\) | GOV.WALES](#) (Wales)

[What someone can whistleblow about - Whistleblowing at work - Acas](#)

NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.